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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

8 August 1950

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Korean Situation

I. Military Situation

Summary

Heavy fighting continues on the Chinju front and attacking US units have made small gains. The enemy, however, has reportedly crossed the Nam River in undetermined strength on the right flank of US troops. Continuing enemy probing attacks in the other sectors are being resisted. Considerable movement of enemy transport and tanks in the rear areas has been reported, with an enemy tank regiment eight miles east of Hyopchon in the southern sector.

In the southern sector, US troops made limited gains in the Chinju area, but the enemy has been able to cross the Nam River at a point on the right flank of US troops in undetermined strength. UN reconnaissance pilots report that there is considerable movement of enemy trucks on the Kumchon-Lochang road. An enemy tank regiment is reported in the area eight miles east of Hyopchon.

In the central sector, two enemy battalions have reportedly crossed the Nakdong River in the area north of Waegwan, and additional troops with trucks are attempting to cross. Enemy patrols supported by artillery and mortar fire are carrying out probing attacks on the US First Cavalry area.

The enemy is continuing to build up strength in the Sangju-Hamchang area, and air reconnaissance shows movement of over 100 vehicles and artillery pieces on the highway from Sangju to the Nakdong River. The Sixth ROK Division is under attack from an estimated three enemy regiments on a four thousand yard front, but is still holding the high ground in the area.

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In the northern sector, the Yechon-Andong front is generally stabilized despite continued enemy pressure.

Heavy fighting continues in the Yongdok area with the situation remaining unchanged.

UN naval surface and air units were active in close support missions and interdiction of lines of communication. The USS Toledo (heavy cruiser) carried out a bombardment mission along the east coast destroying roads and successfully blocking a tunnel and causing land slides.

UN air units maintained close support of troops and interdiction of enemy lines of communication. The Twenty-Second Bomber Wing reported the sighting of one submarine and one freighter in the bay just off Chinnampo on the west coast north of the 38th Parallel.

II. Other Developments

North Korean commentators are asserting that US military "failures" in Korea are in part caused by the US "blunder" of placing too high a value on mass bombing, and by "hapless" reliance on machines. The North Koreans claim that "mass" bombing has proven an indecisive weapon and that each raid only makes the people still more determined to win the war. While US reliance on machines keeps US troops an easy prey to encirclement, the North Koreans state that they have "hundreds of thousands" of people who can transport (on their backs) all the troops need to push forward through the hills despite US air superiority.

Major General Chong Il Kwon, Commander-in-Chief of the South Korean Army, Navy and Air Forces, has advised his officers and men that UN forces are now fully prepared to launch an offensive immediately. Probably because no other alternative would be as stimulating to the morale of the South Korean armed forces and public, General Chong stated that in annihilating the enemy, South Korean forces would cross the 38th Parallel in order to effect the long-cherished dream of national union and would advance to the Yalu River.

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